In the claims:

For the Examiner's convenience, all pending claims are presented below with changes shown in accordance with the mandatory amendment format.

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a parser to receive packets ~~a packet~~ and to generate ~~a~~ packet search requests ~~request~~;

a plurality of search resources, each search resource to determine a search response based on the packet search requests ~~request~~;

a switch to receive the packet search requests ~~request~~ from the parser and to transmit ~~multicast~~ the packet search requests ~~request~~ to the plurality of search resources; and

a session memory coupled to the switch to store session identifiers associated with each packet, the session identifiers to enable ~~enable~~ the switch to transmit the packets in a session based on associated session processing rules ~~be session aware, wherein session aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets~~.

2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the switch is further configured to receive a search response from each of the plurality of search resources, to select one search response from the received search responses, and to transmit the selected response to the parser.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the parser is further configured to generate ~~a~~ modification requests ~~request~~ for the packets ~~packet~~ based on the search response.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 3, further comprising a plurality of packet modifiers, each packet modifier configured to modify the packets ~~packet~~ using the modification request.

5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the switch is configured to transmit the modification request from the parser to a packet modifier having a shortest queue.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the switch is further configured to transmit the modified packet from the packet modifier to the parser.

7-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

first means for receiving packets ~~a packet~~ and to generate ~~a~~ packet search requests ~~request~~;

second means for generating ~~a~~ packet responses ~~response~~ based on the packet search requests ~~request~~;

third means for receiving the packet search requests ~~request~~ from said first means and for transmitting the packet search requests ~~request~~ to said second means; and

fourth means for storing session identifiers associated with each packet, the session identifiers to enable ~~enabling~~ a switch to transmit the packets in a session based on associated session processing rules ~~be session-aware, wherein session-aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets~~.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the packet search requests are ~~request is~~ selected from the group consisting of: ~~a packet search request~~, ~~a~~ packet modification requests ~~request~~, and ~~a~~ session identification requests ~~request~~.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said third means further comprises means for receiving ~~a~~ packet responses ~~response~~ from said second means, and for transmitting the packet responses ~~response~~ to said first means.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the packet responses are ~~response is~~ selected from the group consisting of: ~~a~~ search responses ~~response~~, ~~a~~ packet modifications ~~modification~~, and ~~a~~ session identifiers ~~identifier~~.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said second means is selected from the group consisting of: a packet modifier, a packet search device, and a session device.

17. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving ~~a packet~~ packets at a parser;

generating ~~a~~ packet search requests ~~request~~ at the parser;

using a switch to transmit the packet search requests ~~request~~ from the parser to a plurality of packet resources; ~~resource,~~

storing session identifiers associated with each packet, the session identifiers to enable ~~wherein~~ the switch to transmit the packets in a session based on associated session processing rules ~~is session aware, wherein session aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets~~; and

using the plurality of packet resources ~~resource~~ to generate a packet search response based on the packet search requests ~~request~~.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the packet search requests are ~~request is~~ selected from the group consisting of: ~~a packet search request,~~ ~~a~~ packet modification requests ~~request~~, and ~~a~~ session identification requests ~~request~~.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, further comprising using the switch to transmit the packet search response from the plurality of packet search resources ~~resource~~ to the parser.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the packet search response is selected from the group consisting of: ~~a search response,~~ a packet modification, and a session identifier.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the plurality of packet resources are ~~resource is~~ selected from the group consisting of: ~~a~~ packet modifiers ~~modifier~~, ~~a~~ packet search devices ~~device~~, and ~~a~~ session devices ~~device~~.

23. (Cancelled)